

Wayne Allard

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SENATOR ALLARD SECURES \$35 MILLION INCREASE IN PILT FUNDING

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colorado) secured a substantive increase in funding for the Department of Interior's Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program in the FY 2006 Interior Appropriations bill, which the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee approved Tuesday. Allard said he was successful in securing \$35 million more than had previously been budgeted for PILT.

"We obtained \$35 million above and beyond the amount asked for by the President in his FY 2006 budget request," said Senator Allard, a member of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee. "This is \$8.2 million more than was provided last year for PILT."

"Despite an incredibly tight budget year, we still managed to meet our obligations to provide local governments with this critical funding," Senator Allard said.

The PILT program provides federal payments to local governments to help offset the property tax revenue they are unable to collect because there are nontaxable federal lands within their boundaries. These payments help local governments provide services such as firefighting and police protection, construction of public schools and roads, and search-and-rescue operations. The FY 2006 bill contains \$235 million for the program nationwide next year.

"PILT payments ensure that counties and communities with heavy federal involvement aren't short-changed when it comes to being able to carry out their most vital functions," Senator Allard said. "The PILT program is vital to the health of local governments in Colorado, particularly in rural counties, and you can be sure I will continue to support this program in the future."

PILT payments are made annually for tax-exempt federal lands administered by the BLM, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (all agencies of the Interior Department), the U.S. Forest Service (part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture), and for federal water projects and some military installations.

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